

Applicant # \_\_\_\_\_

**STARS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM APPLICATION  
FOR A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE**

**Thank you for your interest in applying for the STARS Scholarship Program!** STARS was created to assist students, who are parents, with college expenses that fall outside of most financial aid packages. The program is designed for Pottawattamie County residents that are low-income, full-time students pursuing a degree at an accredited or approved school. Completing a STARS application is *not* a guarantee of acceptance. This scholarship is becoming highly competitive. Please do your best to answer the questions thoroughly and truthfully.

**To be considered for this scholarship, you must meet the deadline – no exceptions:  
Deadline for Spring 2011 is October 25, 2010**

**STEP 1: Confirm your eligibility. PLEASE VERIFY YOUR ELIGIBILITY BY ANSWERING YES OR NO TO EACH QUESTION:**

1. Are you a parent of a child under the age of 18 or who can still be claimed as a dependent on your income taxes? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no
  - a. IF you are a *single* parent, are you the custodial parent?  
\_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no (skip this question if you are *not* a single parent)
2. Are you a U.S. citizen? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no
3. Are you a Pottawattamie County resident? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no
4. Will you reside in Pottawattamie County while in school? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no
5. Are you, or will you be, a FULL-TIME student in school? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no
6. Does your income level qualify your family for public assistance, free/reduced school lunch, Pell Grant or other income-based programs? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no  
*Note: Income will be verified as part of the application process.*
7. Is your intended career or major likely to increase your family income? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no
8. Do you have or are you earning an Associate's degree or if you are in a baccalaureate program, have you been in it at least 2 years? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

**STEP 2: If you answered "YES" to each question, please continue.** If you answered "NO" to any question, then you are probably *not eligible* for the STARS program. You **must meet the criteria** before you can apply. If you have difficulty determining your eligibility, then please call Marsha Grandick, STARS Program Director at 712-322-8800 ext 15.

**STEP 3: If you are eligible, please complete the application and provide all requested material.**

**STEP 4: Review your application, to make sure it is complete, using this checklist:**

- Completed cover sheet (this page)
- Completed application form
- Student verifications and signature (page 4)
- Copy of your most recent Student Aid Report or financial aid award letter from your school. You will receive this after you've completed filling out a FAFSA Application (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
- Copy of official transcripts
- Essay
- Two letters of recommendation from an instructor, professor, supervisor, minister, caseworker or other affiliated community member (NOT a family member).

**STEP 5: Submit this cover sheet, your application and requested materials by the postmarked deadline to:**  
**STARS Scholarship Committee**  
**300 W. Broadway, Suite 212**  
**Council Bluffs, IA 51503**

**Questions? Call Marsha Grandick, Program Director at 712-322-8800 ext 15 or email  
mgrandick@cef.svcoxmail.com**

**I: ABOUT YOU:**

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial: \_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Optional Personal Information:** Answering gender, birth date and ethnicity questions will not affect your application positively or negatively but it will help STARS improve its outreach efforts and evaluation of the program. We hope that you will share this information, but it is not required. **Please circle your response.**

Gender	Ethnicity	Marital Status	Number of Children
Male	Caucasian	Single	1
Female	Latino/Latina	Engaged	2
	African American	Married	3
	Asian American	Divorced	4
	Native American	Separated	5
	Other	Widowed	6+

Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_ Did either of your parents graduate from college? \_\_\_\_\_

***ALL REMAINING QUESTIONS and INFORMATION ARE REQUIRED***

**II. Educational History:**

Highest level of education completed:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Degree \_\_\_\_\_

Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_ City and State: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

**III. ABOUT YOUR CHOSEN COLLEGE, PROGRAM and CAREER:**

Are you currently enrolled in college or a certificate program? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

If yes, what is your GPA? \_\_\_\_\_ If not, what was your GPA when you finished school? \_\_\_\_\_

What school will you attend to earn your bachelor's degree? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your intended start date, or if you're presently a student, when did you begin? \_\_\_\_\_

What major or program do you intend to complete? \_\_\_\_\_

When do you intend to graduate? \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. COMMUNITY and COLLEGE RESOURCES:**

Do you have someone who supports your decision to go to college? Please check all that apply:

- |                             |                        |                           |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| _____parent                 | _____friend            | _____case manager         |
| _____grandparent            | _____spouse or partner | _____neighbor             |
| _____sibling                | _____pastor/minister   | _____other support person |
| _____your child or children | _____social worker     |                           |

**\*STARS does not cover expenses that can be acquired through other organizations. Have you already *applied for or received assistance from any of the following organizations*? Please check all that apply:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free or reduced lunch for school-aged children or food stamps          | <input type="checkbox"/> Promise Jobs   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Iowa Department of Human Services (childcare, FIP, Title XIX-Title 19) | Are you receiving child care, rent assistance, food or clothing from any other organizations not listed here? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catholic Charities   | please list them: _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Section 8 Municipal Housing  | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Women’s shelter/other shelter  | _____   |

**How did you hear about the STARS Scholarship Program? Circle your response.**

At school	STARS Scholar: Name _____	Caseworker: Name _____	STARS flyer	Presentation
Newspaper	Website _____	STARS brochure	Other	Am a STARS scholar

*\*Financial aid for college may consist of grants, loans and scholarships. Scholarships are free money from outside sources that do not have to be paid back. Scholarships may be awarded from a college or another organization.*

**To determine what grants, loans and scholarships you are eligible for, you will need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You can access this online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>. or call 322-8800 ext. 15 for help with this process.**

Have you filed a FAFSA yet? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

If yes, do you qualify for, or were you informed that you will be awarded, a Pell Grant? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no  
*(check with your college or check your Student Aid Report if you don't know the answer)*

If you are *not* eligible or have not been awarded Pell monies, tell us why: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you applied for and been awarded any other scholarships for college ? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

If you have won another scholarship (not from the college), please list the name(s) and amount(s) here:

\_\_\_\_\_, \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**V. CHILD CARE, TRANSPORTATION and OTHER EXPENSES TO BE CONSIDERED:**

Expenses for child care, transportation, supplies and books tend to be the most commonly requested funds from STARS recipients. STARS funds can also cover remedial classes, required uniforms or tools for your trade, student exam fees and other expenses. *If chosen for a STARS Scholarship, you may be required to provide more detailed information about your financial needs.* For now, please provide the following information:

**Child care**

How many custodial children in the household? \_\_\_\_\_

What are their ages? \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe your child care arrangements, if any, while you attend classes: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of primary child care provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of additional child care provider/back up care: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please note: Child care expenses will be verified if you are chosen as a STARS scholar.*

**Transportation**

Do you have a reliable method of transportation while enrolled in school? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

Please describe your transportation arrangements while you attend classes: \_\_\_\_\_

**VI. EMPLOYMENT**

If you are currently employed please complete this section:

Date hired	Name of <i>Current</i> Employer	Location	Position	Hourly Wage	Hours/Week

## **VII. YOUR GOALS and PLANS ESSAY (DO NOT FORGET THIS!!!)**

**We want to know more about you.** Please answer *the following questions in a two – three page essay.* The essay must be typed. **Please DO NOT put your name on the essay.**

***In writing the essay, we want you to consider why you've chosen a particular career path. Are there jobs available in this field? Is it the type of career that you can earn enough to support your family? How much schooling will you need? Are the classes you need to take ones that interest you? You can answer these questions by checking out the school's academic programs on its website. You can also learn the job outlook for your chosen career by checking the Bureau of Labor statistics at <http://www.bls.gov>. Use the information you learn from these and other sources as your supporting research for paragraphs 2 - 5.***

- 1: **Describe in detail why you** decided to further your education and pursue a bachelor's degree at this particular time in your life?
- 2: **Describe** your career goals. Include the skills and/or qualities you possess that are necessary for this career and explain how this career will help your family?
- 3: **Explain** how a bachelor's degree is needed or advantageous for this particular career.
- 4: **What** is the job outlook for this career in the metro area?
- 5: **Describe** your plan for balancing your life while you are in school (being a parent, a student, an employee, etc.).
- 6: **Describe how** you plan to pay for college and if chosen as a STARS scholar, how you will use the scholar's expense fund (e.g. books, supplies, uniforms, child care, transportation, etc.)? Include what resources you have available in case of a financial emergency (e.g. Your car breaks down, how will you get it fixed and/or get to school?)
- 7: **How** do you see yourself helping your community once you've received your degree?
- 8: **Describe** any *special circumstances* that directly affect your financial need for school (i.e. recent divorce, job loss, medical bills, credit issues, or anything else) and/or why you believe you should be chosen as a STARS Scholar for the baccalaureate program.

## **VIII. RECOMMENDATION**

**Please submit two letters of recommendation with your application as follows:**

1. The person writing the recommendation must be a member of the community that is familiar with your quest to earn a bachelor's degree. He/she *cannot* be a family member.
2. Each letter should be addressed to the STARS Scholarship Committee and ***must be included*** with the application.
3. Each letter should describe (1) how the person knows you (2) your likelihood for success in earning a bachelor's degree; and (3) what qualities you possess that are needed for your chosen career.

**X: VERIFICATION/SIGNATURES:**

**STUDENTS: Please check all boxes as verification and sign your name.**

- I certify that the information in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.
- I authorize educational institutions, service providers, government benefit agencies, and employers to release information concerning my STARS application to the Community Education Foundation's STARS staff and STARS selection committee.
- I agree to provide my *class schedule*, documentation of *child care expenses*, proof of *employment*, information about *financial aid* and *college-related expenses* if chosen as a potential STARS scholar.

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**IMPORTANT: PLEASE READ**

The essay is the major piece of information used by the committee to determine your selection. Below is a list of the areas the committee uses to evaluate the essay. Please take time to ensure that your essay adequately includes each of the areas. It is also a good idea to have another person proofread your essay prior to submission. Your essay must receive a minimum score of 75% to be considered for this scholarship.

**Scoring Rubric**

- 5 = Excellent (fully developed)
- 4 = Good (mostly developed)
- 3 = Average (partially developed)
- 2 = Below Average (minimally developed)
- 1 = Poor (lacks development)

**The Essay...**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes reasons for pursuing a bachelor's degree and its impact on the family
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes and supports(using recent research) the career goal and outlook for employment in this field, the education, skills and qualities needed for choosing this career, and explains how it will help the family
- \_\_\_\_\_ Explains paying for college and how the scholarship will help; includes plan for emergency financial situations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describes a plan for balancing life and school
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes special circumstances for needing the scholarship and justifies receiving the scholarship
- \_\_\_\_\_ Includes plans for "giving back" to the community
- \_\_\_\_\_ Appears personalized, genuine, and sincere
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shows technical proficiency (organization, grammar & mechanics)

**Thank you for your application!**